

Lake Bluff, IL -- During a breakfast held today at the Harrison Conference Center, U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Highland Park) announced the appointment of seven area students to the United States military academies. Kirk, joined by Admiral Ann Rondeau, commander Naval Station Great Lakes, applauded these outstanding young people and their families.

"I am very proud of these young men and women. Appointment to a military academy reflects scholastic achievement, character, and leadership," said Congressman Kirk. "Our students represent the 10th District's tradition of academic excellence and outstanding community service. The appointment of seven students to our military academies also reflects the strong academic achievement enjoyed by our youth. A typical congressional district would receive appointments for only four students."

Students entering the academies this fall will graduate in 2006. Congressman Kirk has already begun accepting applications for the Class of 2007 and will begin the screening and interviewing process for academy nomination in early December.

Congressman Kirk announced the following appointments:

United States Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Colorado: Patrick Joseph McMahon, Arlington Heights, Matthew Fuqua, Buffalo Grove.

United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland: John Keith, Kenilworth.

United States Military Academy at West Point, New York: Alice Kim, Glenview, Patrick Swanson, Lincolnshire, John McKaskey, Winnetka.

United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York: Jarred Schwandt, Libertyville.

Nominations are the recommendations a Member of Congress makes to each military academy. A nomination is not an appointment - appointments are made by each academy - and a Member of Congress can make more nominations than there are available vacancies at any academy. Each U.S. Representative may have a maximum of five cadets or midshipmen at each Department of Defense service academy at any one time. The Merchant Marine Academy has a quota for each state and each Member of Congress may nominate up to 10 candidates per year.

Rather than make nominations personally, Congressman Kirk chose to delegate his power of nomination to his nonpartisan Military Academy Selection Steering Committee being chaired by Captain James Lovell, Apollo 13 commander and Naval Academy graduate.

"I have asked my committee to identify outstanding young Americans from our communities who will one day lead the men and women of our Armed Forces," said Congressman Kirk.

The Steering Committee, made up of educators, military personnel, and academy graduates who reside in the district, will begin interviewing military academy applicants from the 10th Congressional District in early December. The deadline for academy nomination is January 31, 2002.

There are five service academies, or colleges, that train officers for the United States military. Three service academies fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense and two under the Department of Transportation.

The DOD operates the U.S. Air Force, Military (Army) and Naval Academies and the DOT operates the Merchant Marine and Coast Guard Academies. Congressional nominations are usually necessary to enter any academy except the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard Academy deals directly with interested persons.

To be considered for an academy appointment, an applicant must first be nominated. U.S. Senators and Members of the U.S. House of Representatives may nominate applicants who meet the following eligibility requirements: 17 years of age, but not have passed his or her 23rd birthday, he or she must be a U.S. citizen, and the applicant must be unmarried, not pregnant, and have no legal obligation to support children or other dependents. Those interested in

applying for the Class of 2007 should contact Congressman Kirk's Waukegan office at 847-662-0101.